

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION PM-04

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 NSC-05

SP-02 SS-15 /040 W

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R 041642Z SEP 75

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1033

INFO DIA WASH DC

S E C R E T LAGOS 8642

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, NI

SUBJ: NIGERIAN INTEREST IN PURCHASING MILITARY EQUIPMENT

REF : (A) LAGOS 7987 (B) STATE 168548

(C) USDAO LAGOS IR 6 871 0183 75 181353Z AUG 7

1. AS INDICATED IN REFS (A) AND (C) NIGERIAN AIR FORCE (NAF) IS UNCERTAIN WHETHER TO BUY US F-5'S AND HELICOPTERS AT HANOI BARGAIN BASEMENT OR GET NEW EQUIPMENT. HELICOPTER PRICE TAG IS ATTRACTIVE, BUT THEY ARE CONCERNED ABOUT CONDITION OF USED EQUIPMENT AND ABOUT AVAILABILITY FMS SPARE PARTS.

2. IF FMS SPARES ARE FLATLY UNAVAILABLE FOR AFRICAN MILITARY EQUIPMENT CAPTURED IN SOUTH EAST ASIA AND PURCHASED FROM HANOI BY FRIENDLY THIRD COUNTRIES, BEST FOR FMG TO KNOW IT NOW. THIS MIGHT HELP DISSUADE THEM FROM HANOI PURCHASES. MOREOVER, IF FMG WERE TO PURCHASE U.S. EQUIPMENT FROM HANOI WITHOUT KNOWING U.S. POSITION, A LATER TURNDOWN OF REQUEST FOR SPARES WOULD BE MORE DIFFICULT AND MORE DAMAGING TO U.S./NIGERIAN RELATIONS THAN WOULD OEGATIVE RESPONSE AT THIS JUNCTURE.

3. ON OTHER HAND, IF NAF WERE TO PURCHASE U.S. AIRCRAFT FROM HANOI, THIS MIGHT AT LEAST BE A FOOT IN THE DOOR, OPENIOW WAY NOT ONLY FOR SPARE PARTS SALES BUT POSSIBLY ALSO FOR SALE OF BASIC AVIAION EQUIPMENT DIRECTLY FROM U.S. HERETOFORE, SOVIETS AND U.K. HAVE HAD INSIDE TRACK ON MUCH OF NIGERIA'S

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MILITARY PURCHASES. AS FMG IS CLEARLY DETERMINED TO ACQUIRE

MILITARY HARDWARE, WE DO NOT BELIEVE IT USEFUL TO ATTEMPT
DISCOURAGE THEM FROM MAKING SUCH PURCHASES IN U.S.

4. UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES, OPTIMUM POSITION MIGHT BE TO INDICATE
RELUCTANCE NOW REPEAT NOW ON PROVISION OF FMS POSITION THAT
IT WOULD COMPLETELY PRECLUDE PROVISION FMS SPARES LATER IF
NAF WERE NEVERTHELESS TO BUY HANOI AIRCRAFT.

5. WOULD APPRECIATE WASHINGTON VI
WS AND GUIDANCE.
EASUM

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY EQUIPMENT, MILITARY PROCUREMENT, AIRCRAFT SALES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 04 SEP 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: greeneet
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975LAGOS08642
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750307-0593
From: LAGOS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750985/aaaacwur.tel
Line Count: 72
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION PM
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 LAGOS 7987, 75 STATE 168548
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: greeneet
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 AUG 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <27 AUG 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <15 DEC 2003 by greeneet>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NIGERIAN INTEREST IN PURCHASING MILITARY EQUIPMENT
TAGS: MASS, NI, VN, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006